

ENROLMENT POLICIES  
IN INDIAN EDUCATION

by

J. P. NAIK

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INDRAPRASTHA ESTATE, RING ROAD  
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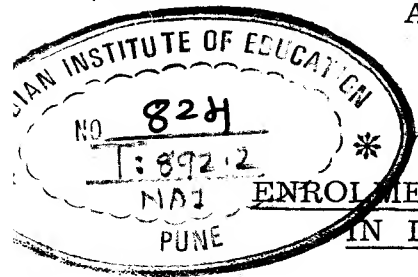
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Who shall be educated--that is one of the major questions which has to be decided in planning a national system of education. The object of this paper is to study a few problems relating to student enrolments in Indian education in the post-independence period. But before turning to the subject proper, it is necessary to examine some problems of general policy.

## II

### GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

2. The traditional approach to the problem of student enrolments is very simple. The formal system of education begins at about the age of three with pre-primary education and continues, through the distinct stages of elementary, secondary and higher education, till about the age of 24 when a person is expected to receive the highest degree which a university can give. This long course of training, however, is not meant for all. It is only elementary education that is to be provided for all children on a compulsory basis. Pre-primary education is meant for a few, while secondary and higher education also is similarly restricted and is to be provided, on a selective basis, to only a small proportion of the total population in the age-group. For the adults, there need hardly be any provision of educational facilities except to make up the deficiencies arising from the failure to

receive the appropriate type of education in childhood. For instance, campaigns for the liquidation of illiteracy could be organised for those adults who did not go to school in their childhood or who subsequently lapsed into illiteracy.\*

3. These ideas of a very restricted provision of all but elementary education were inescapable in an under-developed economy which could only support a limited educational provision. But all the same, they were justified on philosophical grounds as well. For example, it was argued that education was preparation for life so that it was to be completed before 'life' or 'adulthood' began. This made adult education, except in the remedial sense stated above, inessential and the view was further supported by the very slow pace of social change which rendered a programme of adult education almost superfluous. Similarly, it was also argued that ~~secondary~~ ~~any~~ and higher education was meant only for the talented students and that it would be wasted on all but a small fraction of total population in the age-group. But such rationalisations should not blind us to the fact that these views were essentially financial in origin: in the traditional societies which were predominantly agricultural and poor, it was not possible even to provide compulsory elementary education and the moderately industrialised societies of the nineteenth century could only

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\* The Sargent Plan, for instance, provided pre-primary education to one child out of every 21, compulsory elementary education to all children in the age-group 6-14, secondary education to one child in every five who completed the primary school (age-group 6-11), and higher education to one student out of every 15 who completed the secondary stage. It also proposed a programme for the liquidation of adult illiteracy.

afford to maintain a small number of high school or college graduates.

4. The situation in the highly industrialised societies of today is, however, entirely different. The old view that education, which is preparation for life, comes to an end with adulthood is no longer valid. Knowledge is advancing so fast and social change has become so rapid that there is now need for each person to educate himself almost continuously. Education, therefore, is not preparation for life, but life itself. This has added great significance to the programmes of adult education which now mean, not remedial action for failure to receive education in childhood, but the continuous further education of those who are already highly educated. Similarly, the old concept of only a few being worthy of secondary and higher education is also obsolete. Intelligence depends, partly on inheritance and partly on environment, so that the number of persons who have the 'talent' to benefit from secondary and higher education goes on increasing from generation to generation as education spreads and standards of living tend to rise. There is thus no reason, on purely academic grounds, to restrict drastically the provision of secondary and higher education to a selected few. This view is further strengthened by two considerations. The first is the change that has taken place in the very concept and function of knowledge. In the past, knowledge had essentially a cultural connotation so that 'education' in general and secondary and higher education in particular were meant for a leisured class which was basically an 'unproductive' group—the word 'school' itself is derived from a Greek word which means 'leisure'—and which had to be supported by the toiling masses who received little or no education but who were really the 'productive' group in society. Today, knowledge has been so intimately geared to productivity and secondary and higher education have been so largely vocationalised that it is really the uneducated man who has become 'unproductive' and an

economic liability while the highly educated man has become the 'central resource' of society, and an abundant and increasing supply of highly educated people has become a pre-condition for progress, growth or even survival. The second consideration which lends support to this need to expand secondary and higher education is the adoption of science and technology which is the key to the creation of an industrial society and which has set up a complementary relationship between education and economic growth. On the one hand, industrialisation needs very large groups of people who have received secondary and higher education—for they alone can do the complex tasks which such a society sets for its members—and, on the other hand, it also creates that affluence of economic goods and leisure which alone can make the provision of secondary and higher education on a very large scale financially possible. Consequently, the concept of a restricted provision of secondary and higher education to the gifted few has become obsolete and has been replaced by the new goal of secondary education for all and higher education for as many as possible.

5. If all these developments are put together, one realises what an 'educational revolution' has taken place between the 'traditional and poor societies' of the eighteenth century and the highly 'industrialised and affluent societies' of the present day. In the first, education was oriented to leisure and culture rather than to production and occupied only a small part of life. Its provision, even at the elementary stage, was restricted to a few while secondary and higher education was the privilege of a small parasitic class that lived on the crude labour of the ignorant and hard-worked masses. In the second, education has become production-oriented and coextensive with life, the entire population is continuously engaged in educating itself so that 'education' has become the most extensive and all-pervasive national industry, and not only elementary, but even secondary

education is provided for all and higher education to an increasingly larger band of young persons. India is an illustration of the first while the USA is a good example of the second.

6. What are the implications of these developments for the immediate reconstruction of education in India (and especially for enrolment policies to be adopted) which is attempting to transform itself from a traditional, agricultural, rural and poor society into a modern, industrialised, largely urban and fairly well-to-do society within the span of a single generation?

The first lesson is the need to relate education with productivity. If this is not done, and if educated people continue to be unproductive and parasitic, the spread of education will lead to an increase of poverty in the first instance and ultimately to a reduction in the provision of education itself.

The second lesson is that the linking of education with productivity which is the characteristic feature of a modern industrialised society, is secured mainly by the adoption of science and technology and by (1) the development of research, and (2) the vocationalisation of secondary and higher education. It is true that each country will have to decide for itself how its education is to be oriented to production. But a comparative study of the problem will show that the difference in this respect from country to country or, in the same country, from one period to another, is merely related to the different types of researches to be undertaken or the different forms of vocationalisation of secondary and higher education and that the two essential features of the programme common to all countries and all situations are (1) the development of research, and (2) the vocation-

alisation of secondary and higher education.\*

The third lesson is that the policies of expanding enrolments at all stages of education are practicable only to the extent the national economy develops. The large expanding enrolments at the elementary, secondary and higher stages of education require two things :

- (1) The State must incur a very large expenditure on education; and
- (2) The income of the average parent must also increase very considerably in order to enable him to feed and clothe his children and maintain them at school for a sufficiently long period.

It is obvious that both these conditions would not be fulfilled unless there is a simultaneous improvement in the national economy. In other words, the economic and educational developments of a country have to progress side by side, each supporting the other.

7. An examination of the existing trends in educational developments in India will show that we are imitating or trying to imitate the modern highly industrialised and affluent societies of the West in respect of their present policies of enrolment at various stages and that we are attracted specially by the American developments in this

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\* In modern society, the major link of education to social structure is through the economy and this is a linkage of both stimulus and response. Contemporary educational organisations stimulate economic change through research and, in turn, they respond to economic change in carrying out the function of selection and training of manpower. — Jean Floud and A. H. Halsey in Education, Economy and Society p 12.

sector. Our commitment to the provision of universal elementary education is absolute and has been embodied in the Constitution as a directive of State Policy. But even before we have realised it or are even within the distant sight of its realisation, we have committed ourselves to a programme of free education and open-door policy at the secondary stage. Simultaneously, we are committed to an open-door policy in higher education also and are further committed to provide it as cheaply as possible and to as many as possible. There would, of course, have been no problems involved in this imitation of American goals if it had been accompanied by the three changes necessary for their successful adoption, *viz.*, (1) relating education to productivity, (2) development of research, and (3) vocationalisation of secondary and higher education. But this has not been done with the result that we have juxtaposed 'the enrolment policies of a modern, rich and highly industrialised society' on what still is a 'traditional, poor and agricultural' society. This creates several forms of malaise of which the most important are three:

- (1) Frustration due to the failure to realise accepted and widely advertised goals;
- (2) large-scale unemployment among those who have received the traditional type of secondary and higher education meant essentially for the 'gentlemen' of leisure and affluence; and
- (3) watering down of quality because the resources to support the educational system are far below the enrolmental strains that are placed on it.

The four ways out of the situation are :

- (1) To abandon the policies of expanding enrolment ;
- (2) to relate education to productivity and to vocationalise secondary and higher education;
- (3) to discover new techniques which would reduce unit costs in education without affecting essential quality so that larger enrolments in a fairly efficient system are possible despite the meagre resources available; or
- (4) a combination of one or more of these in some suitable manner.

This is, therefore, one significant area in our educational planning, where, as Dr. D.S. Kothari put it, the desired solution can only come through 'an expenditure of thought.'

8. There is still another aspect of this problem which merits attention, *viz.*, the implications, for a strategy of educational development, of the need to telescope programmes of educational expansion and improvement. For instance, the new policies of expanding enrolments at all stages of education were adopted in the West slowly and progressively. England introduced universal elementary education between 1870 and 1918; the attempt to expand secondary education and to deepen its quality was first made with the Education Act of 1902 while the movement was taken to its logical conclusion and secondary education was provided for all, under the Butler Act, between 1944 and 1964; and finally the expansion of higher education would be attempted, in terms of the Robbins Report, between 1964 and 1980. In India, all these separate stages of development will have to be



telescoped in the life-span of a generation and attempted together. The telescoping creates several difficult problems which arise partly from the tempo of the changes proposed and partly from the wide gap between the demand for educational development on the one hand and the stage of economic development reached on the other. There is very little guidance, in the history of advanced countries, for the solution of these problems because they were never required to face them. Nor will the solutions discovered by one developing country be necessarily applicable to another. Each developing country, therefore, will have to think and discover these solutions by itself. Obviously, they will include

- (1) large sacrifices in the sense of allocating a larger proportion of national income to education ;
- (2) harder work on behalf of teachers and students ;
- (3) provision of part-time education (inclusive of correspondence education) on an extensive scale ;
- (4) discovery of techniques which would make it possible to attain quality at a low level of cost ;
- (5) selective approaches to the development of different institutions or sectors of education ;
- (6) emphasis on education of quality being provided to the gifted students at least ; or
- (7) any suitable combination of one or more of these. This is another area of educational reconstruction to which the Education Departments will have to address themselves seriously.

### III

#### ENROLMENT BY AGE-GROUPS

9. With these introductory observations we can now proceed to the discussion of (1) the pupil/student enrolments in our educational system as they are at present, (2) the trends of development which they reveal, and (3) the problems which they create. We will begin this discussion with enrolments of pupils or students in the different age-groups, irrespective of the stage of education at which they may be reading.

10. Statistics of student enrolment in all types of educational institutions, classified by their age, are available for each year from 1949-50 to 1960-61. The usual classification adopted for age is (a) below 5, (b) each single year of age between 5-6 and 24-25, and (c) above 25. For purposes of convenience, the discussion in this paper is restricted to the age-group 5-24 (the enrolments in each single year of age being discussed separately) and the very small number of children below five years of age who are mostly enrolled in the pre-primary stage as well as the students of 25 years and above who are also very few will not be discussed here.

11. The total enrolment in all types of educational institutions in 1951 and 1961, classified according to each single year of age between 5-6 and 24-25, as well as its proportion to the total population in the age-group is given in the following table :--

Table No : I

Total Enrolments in the Age-Group 5-24 by Single Year of Age  
(Figures in thousands)

Age	Total Enrolment of Pupils/ Students				Proportion of Total Enrolment to Total Population in the Age-Group			
	1951		1961		1951		1961	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
5-6	10,98	4,73	19,31	9,63	22.9	10.0	30.8	15.8
6-7	22,45	9,64	38,00	19,56	47.6	21.0	62.7	33.3
7-8	24,02	9,70	42,78	22,52	51.9	21.7	72.8	39.6
8-9	22,84	9,47	40,20	20,19	50.2	21.8	70.5	36.7
9-10	20,51	7,97	35,36	16,74	46.0	18.8	63.8	31.4
10-11	17,70	6,54	31,64	14,10	40.5	15.9	59.1	27.4
Total (3-11)	1,07,52	43,32	1,88,18	93,11	47.3	19.9	65.8	33.8
11-12	14,90	4,53	26,21	10,42	34.9	11.3	50.0	20.9
12-13	11,94	3,08	21,69	7,89	28.6	7.9	42.6	16.3
13-14	9,30	2,03	17,54	5,50	22.8	5.3	35.4	11.8
Total (11-14)	36,14	9,64	65,41	23,81	28.8	8.2	42.8	16.4
14-15	7,61	1,49	14,07	3,98	19.1	4.0	29.2	8.8
15-16	5,90	98	11,04	2,88	15.1	2.7	23.6	6.5

16-17	4,35	64	8,44	2,01	11.5	1.8	18.6	4.7
17-18	3,02	45	6,24	1,39	8.2	1.3	14.1	3.3
Total (14-18)	20,88	3,56	39,79	10,26	13.6	2.5	21.6	5.9
18-19	2,25	31	4,73	98	6.3	0.9	11.0	2.4
19-20	1,53	21	3,43	68	4.4	0.6	8.2	1.7
20-21	1,30	21	2,64	47	3.8	0.6	6.5	1.2
21-22	85	11	1,94	34	2.6	0.3	4.9	0.9
22-23	79	12	1,47	24	2.4	0.4	3.8	0.7
23-24	63	9	1,19	20	2.0	0.3	3.1	0.5
24-25	57	9	95	20	1.8	0.3	2.5	0.6
Total (18-25)	7,92	1,14	16,35	3,11	3.4	0.5	5.8	1.2



12. Let us first take the children below 14 years of age who are ordinarily expected to be at the elementary stage. It will be seen from the above table that, in the age-group 5-6, the total enrolment is very small. Even in 1961, it was only 19.31 lakhs of boys (or 30.8% of the population of the age-group) and 9.63 lakhs of girls (or 15.8% of the age-group). This is so because the age of admission to primary schools is generally six plus in most of the States. It will also be seen that the best enrolments we have been able to make so far are in the age-groups 6-7 (62.7% for boys and 33.3% for girls), 7-8 (72.8% for boys and 39.6% for girls), and 8-9 (70.5% for boys and 36.7% for girls). It must be pointed out that, at this age, the child is not generally of much use to the parents for work at home (this is mostly true of boys, while girls do help the mother in a number of ways even at these early years). The parents are, therefore, not unwilling (or are even anxious) to send their children to schools in these age-groups as it simply means the transfer of a 'nuisance' from home to the school. But as soon as the age of about nine years is reached and the child begins to be useful at home for some work or the other, his attendance begins to fall, and reaches comparatively very low levels by the time the age-group 13-14 is reached. For instance, it will be seen from the above table that the enrolment of children in schools declines sharply from the age-group 8-9 (70.5% for boys, 36.7% for girls) to age-group 13-14 (35.4% for boys and 11.8% for girls). The enrolment is halved for the boys in this five-year period; and in the case of girls, the fall is much steeper and the enrolment is reduced to about one-third—due partly to the girls being more useful at home than the boys and partly to early marriages or betrothals which are still fairly common in rural areas.

13. In the age-groups 14-15 to 17-18 which correspond

broadly to the secondary stage\*, the fall continues although it becomes a little less steep. In this period of four years, the enrolment for boys is again reduced to about half (from 29.2% in the age-group 14-15 to 14.1% in the age-group 17-18) and that of girls is almost reduced to three-eighths (from 8.8% in the age-group 14-15 to 3.3% in the age-group 17-18).

14. In the age-groups 18-19 to 24-25 which correspond roughly to the collegiate stage, the fall in enrolment is steeper than at the secondary stage. The enrolment of boys is reduced from 11% in the age-group 18-19 to 2.5% in the age-group 24-25 and that of girls from 2.4% for the age-group 18-19 to 0.6% for the age-group 24-25. This is obviously to be expected.

15. If the enrolments in 1951 are compared with those in 1961, the trend in the growth of enrolments becomes obvious. For instance, at all stages of education the increase in the enrolment of girls is proportionately greater than that amongst the boys. For instance, in the age-group 6-11, the enrolment of boys has increased from 47.3% of the total population to 65.8%, while that of girls has increased from 19.9% to 33.8%; in the age-group 11-14, the enrolment of boys increased only from 28.8% to 42.5% while that of girls has been doubled—from 8.2% to 16.4%; in the age-group 14-18, the enrolment of boys has increased only from 13.6% to 21.6% while that of girls is more than doubled—from 2.5% to 5.9%; and in the age-group 18-25, the enrolment of boys

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\* It must be remembered that, owing either to a late start or to retardation, several students of this age-group are reading, not at the secondary stage, but at lower stages. This is also true of the next age-group which corresponds to higher education. This problem will, however, be dealt with in detail in a later section.

has increased only from 3.4% to 5.8% while that of girls has again been more than doubled--from 0.5% to 1.2%. This is a welcome sign and it shows that the gap in the education of boys and girls is being bridged, although some may like the process to be a little faster, especially at the school stage.

## IV

## ENROLMENTS BY AGES AND GRADES

16. In the foregoing discussion, the enrolments in all types of educational institutions were considered only with respect to age and the general assumption made was that the enrolments in the age-group 6-14 relate to the elementary stage, those in age-group 18-25 relate to the university stage. Such an assumption would be correct if children of the age-group 6-7 only were enrolled in class I and if they progressed from class to class every year without any stagnation. In the Indian educational system, however, such an assumption is hardly justified. The children enrolled in class I belong, not only to the age-group 6-7, but also to several age-groups below and above it. In fact, the age composition of class I is so heterogeneous that the age composition in every higher class would also be equally heterogeneous, even if all children were regularly promoted from class to class and there was no stagnation. As it is, the extent of stagnation itself happens to be very large so that, in the higher grades, the age-composition of the students becomes even more heterogeneous. It is, therefore, necessary to study the age-composition of the students in each grade or in every type of educational institution in some detail.

17. The following table shows the enrolment in a few selected school classes according to age-groups in 1960-61 and also the average age for each class :--

Table No : II

Average Age in Grades I, IV, VII and XI (1960-61)

Age-groups	Enrolment in Grade							
	I		IV		VII		XI	
	Number (2)	% (3)	Number (4)	% (5)	Number (6)	% (7)	Number (8)	% (9)
5-6	26,64,947	20.1	492	0.0	-	-	-	-
6-7	42,91,489	32.4	21,166	0.5	-	-	-	-
7-8	32,22,787	24.3	1,82,193	4.0	231	0.0	-	-
8-9	16,80,693	12.7	7,03,546	15.3	3,337	0.2	-	-
9-10	7,79,094	5.9	11,47,494	25.0	31,055	1.4	-	-
10-11	3,87,518	2.9	11,01,566	24.0	1,45,895	6.6	39	1.0
11-12	1,51,996	1.2	7,14,779	15.6	3,62,216	16.3	1,004	0.2
12-13	43,877	0.4	4,18,864	9.1	5,42,722	24.4	5,744	1.2
13-14	14,738	0.1	1,92,493	4.2	4,83,505	21.8	24,985	5.0
14-15	4,541	0.0	73,966	1.6	3,16,754	14.3	54,854	11.0
15-16	1,118	0.0	25,440	0.5	1,81,366	8.1	89,595	18.0
16-17	298	0.0	7,298	0.2	88,655	4.0	1,04,049	20.9
17-18	309	0.0	2,373	0.0	39,233	1.8	91,983	18.5

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(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
13-19	34	0.0	684	0.0	16,526	0.7	58,765	11.8
19-20	28	0.0	183	0.0	5,905	0.3	34,845	7.0
20-21	28	0.0	77	0.0	2,004	0.1	18,723	3.8
21-22	4	0.0	20	0.0	544	0.0	8,218	1.7
22-23	-	-	18	0.0	172	0.0	2,811	0.6
23-24	-	-	12	0.0	80	0.0	1,196	0.2
24-25	2	0.0	12	0.0	73	0.0	455	0.1
Total	1,32,48,501	100	45,92,676	100	22,20,273	100	4,97,266	100

Average age  
for the class  
(in years)

10.4

13.2

16.8

18. It will be seen from the above tables that, owing to the failure to evolve a proper policy for fresh admissions to schools and the large prevalence of stagnation, the age-composition of every class at the school stage is very heterogeneous, and that there is a large proportion of pupils in every class who are both below and above the appropriate age for that class. For instance, the appropriate age for class I is 6-7; and yet the children in this age-group form only 32.4% of the total enrolment in the class whereas they ought to form about 70-80%! This is due to two reasons: (1) We do not make an attempt to enroll all fresh children to schools only in the age-group 6-7 so that a large proportion of children below and above this age are also enrolled; and (2) owing to the large prevalence of stagnation, many of those children who are enrolled at the appropriate age of 6-7 also stay on in the class till they are 8, 9 or even 10.

Similarly, in class IV, the appropriate age-group is 9-10; but the children in this age-group form only 25% of the total enrolment in class IV; the appropriate age for class VII is 12-13, but the children in this age-group form only 24.4% of the total enrolment in this class; and in class XI, the children of the appropriate age-group (16-17) form only 20.9% of the total enrolment in the class.

There has hardly been any change in this picture during the last ten years. We are not even conscious of the problem and we have made no effort so far to improve the situation. It has to be noted that the present heterogeneity of age-groups in each class affects the standards adversely and that it is essential to make these classes homogeneous from the point of view of age as soon as practicable. To this end, we must make an intensive effort to restrict all fresh admissions to class I to the age-group 6-7 so that the children of this age-group would form about 70-80% of the total enrolment in this class. Secondly, we must also reduce stagnation to the

\* minimum so that the bulk (70-80%) of the children in each class at the school stage would also be in the age-group appropriate to that class.

19. Owing to the wrong policies of fresh enrolment and the large prevalence of stagnation, what happens in each class, also happens at each stage of education, and the total enrolment at any stage is not also confined to the age-group appropriate to that stage. This will be seen clearly from the two tables given in Annexures I and II. For convenience of discussion, the main points that arise from the statistics of 1961 may be listed as follows :--

(1) Of the total enrolment in the age-group 6-25 in classes I-V, that in the appropriate age-group, viz., 6-11 is 83.6% for boys and 86.9% for girls; that in the age-group 11-14 is 14.7% for boys and 12.3% for girls; that in the age-group 14-18 is 1.5% for boys and 0.8% for girls; and that in the age-group 18-25 is 0.2% for boys.

(2) Of the total enrolment in the age-group 6-25 in classes VI-VIII, that in the appropriate age-group, viz., 11-14 is 56.8% for boys and 60.7% for girls; that in the age-group 6-11 is 13.0% for boys and 14.2% for girls; that in the age-group 14-18 is 28.7% for boys and 24.4% for girls; and that in the age-group 18-25 is 1.5% for boys and 0.7% for girls.

(3) Of the total enrolment in the age-group 6-25 in classes IX-XII, that in the appropriate age-group, viz. 14-18 is 67.3% for boys and 72.4% for girls; that in the age-group 6-11 is 0.3% for boys and 0.2% for girls; that in the age-group 11-14 is 15.7% for boys and 15.0% for girls; and that in the age-group 18-25 is 16.7% for boys and 12.4% for girls.

(4) Of the total enrolment at the university stage (general education), that in the appropriate age-group,

viz., 18-25 is 67.2% for boys and 63.9% for girls; that in the age-group 14-18, is 32.6% for boys and 36.1% for girls; and that in the age-group 11-14 is 0.2% for boys.

(5) In institutions of professional education at the university stage, the picture is a little better. The enrolment in the appropriate age-group viz. 18-25 is 83.4% for boys and 82.1% for girls; and that in the age-group 14-18 is 16.6% for boys and 17.9% for girls.

(6) Of the total enrolment in the age-group 6-25 in the vocational schools, that in the appropriate age-group, viz. 14-18 is only 27.0% for boys and 29.7% for girls; that in the age-group 6-11 is 4.3% for boys and 7.0% for girls; that in the age-group 11-14 is 8.0% for boys and 10.0% for girls; and that in the age-group 18-25 is 60.7% for boys and 53.3% for girls.

(7) The comparison of the statistics of 1951 with those of 1961 shows that the picture has remained practically unchanged in the last decade.

20. The same motley picture can be seen if we take a cross section of the enrolments in the different age-groups and relate them to the various stages of education. For instance, in the age-group 14-18, most of the enrolment ought to have been at the second level (i. e. secondary schools and vocational schools). But it is only 51% for boys and 49.1% for girls. Similarly, in the age-group 18-25, most of the enrolment ought to have been at the university stage; but it is only 27.7% for boys and 27.6% for girls. This highlights the need to revise our enrolment policies and to reduce stagnation.

## V

### ENROLMENT ACCORDING TO GRADES

21. We saw earlier that as we move up from age 9 to age 24, there was a continuous fallowing to drop-out or

\*wastage. If we move up from grade I to grade XII, the fall becomes even steeper because it includes drop-out as well as stagnation. This will be seen from the statistics given in Annexure III. A few of the conclusions that can be drawn from it are given below :--

#### BOYS :

(1) The largest stagnation and drop-out take place in Class I. We have here the evidence of eleven different cohorts and it will be seen that against every 100 children in Class I in a given year, there are only about 60 in class II in the following year. During the last twelve years, this wastage has increased, from 34.9% to 39.5%. The situation is bad and has not received any attention. My studies show that a child, on an average, takes 2.3 years to get out of Class I. In fact, class I of the primary school may well be called the three-year degree course!

(2) Stagnation and wastage continue to dominate the primary stage (classes I-V). We have the evidence of eight cohorts here. They show that against every 100 children in class I in any given year, there are only about 38 in class V four years later. The wastage in the primary stage as a whole has been reduced from 63.9% in 1953-54 to 61.7% in 1960-61, showing thereby that if the child does survive Class I, his chances of completing the primary stage are about 2 in 3 and that these are becoming brighter every year.

(3) Stagnation and wastage continue at the middle school stage also (classes VI-VIII). We have evidence here of five cohorts. It will be seen therefrom that against 100 children in class I in any given year, there are about 25 in class VIII seven years later. The picture is improving because the wastage over this period has been reduced from 79.3% in 1956-57 to 75% in 1960-61. it is, of course, obvious that the wastage is still too

large and that it is being reduced very slowly.

#### GIRLS:

(4) The above conclusions apply to girls as well, with the difference that, in their case, wastage is greater still. For instance, in 1960-61 reduction from class I to class II is about 43.3% as against 39.5% for boys; that in the primary stage is 70.9% as against 61.7% for boys; and that at the elementary stage is 85% as against 75% for boys.

22. One general misunderstanding needs clarification in this context. Because we permit almost every student who completes his elementary school to go on to a secondary school or because we permit every student who has completed the secondary school to go on further to a college, it is claimed that our system of secondary and collegiate education is non-selective. Nothing can be further from truth. Of every 100 children that begin their journey up the educational ladder in class I, only about 20 are left by the time they complete class VIII. This is a worse selection than the much condemned selection at eleven plus in England which covers about 25% of the children. The elimination of the 80% is done on the most arbitrary and cruel basis—poverty. Those who are left to continue belong mostly to urban areas and the middle and upper classes. They are also mostly boys. One shudders to realise the waste this involves. Out of every five young persons who, on the basis of talent, ought to have been in secondary schools, four are eliminated at the start; and out of five children who are actually in secondary schools, probably four do not deserve to be there! And obviously similar observations can be made about higher education also.

## TRANSITION FROM ONE STAGE OF EDUCATION TO ANOTHER

23. We shall now turn to the consideration of another aspect of the problem, viz., the extent to which pupils/students can pass from one stage of education to another. In a broad way, this exercise could be done by comparing the enrolment in the top class of one stage with that in the first class of the next stage in the following year. Obviously, the exercise has to be done separately for each State or Union Territory because the stages are differently defined from area to area. It will also have to be done separately for boys and girls. In Annexure IV, this has been done for two years 1950-51/1951-52 and 1960-61/1961-62 so that the trends in each could also be discerned.

24. The main conclusions to be drawn from these statistics have been summarised below :—

(1) At the end of the elementary stage (classes I-IV or I-V), 71.3% boys and 55.7% girls passed on to the next stage in 1950-51/1951-52. Ten years later in 1960-61/1961-62, this proportion rose to 84.1% for boys and 75.2% for girls.

(2) At the end of the middle school stage (classes V-VII or VI-VIII), the proportion of children who passed on to secondary stage was 76.5% for boys and 63.8% for girls in 1950-51/1951-52. It increased to 83.8% for boys and 78.5% for girls in 1960-61/1961-62.

(3) At the end of the secondary stage, the proportion of students who went up to higher education was 39.2% for boys and 39.4% for girls. It rose to 45.9% for

boys and 44.2% for girls.

25. It is thus evident that the tendency to continue at school and to pass over from one stage to another is increasing very fast. What will happen is that, within the next 10-15 years every one who has completed the middle school will pass on to the secondary school and about 60% of those who complete the secondary school will pass on to the college. In another 10-15 years, which is the time required to introduce universal elementary education, almost every one who completes a secondary school (and does not get a job) will pass on to the college. In other words, we shall provide universal compulsory education in about 30 years, so that every child who enters class I shall also reach class VIII (as against about 20 who do so at present). If our present open-door policies at secondary and higher education continue as they are, we shall find that simultaneously, we shall also be providing universal secondary education because the rate of transfer from elementary to secondary would then have increased to 100% (as against about 80% at present), and we would also be providing higher education to about 80% of the age-group because the rate of transfer from secondary to higher education would have increased to about 80%. In other words, we have embarked upon a programme, not of providing universal elementary education in the age-group 6-14 only, but of providing, almost simultaneously, universal elementary, secondary and higher education in the age-group 6-24! Of this, the most difficult part of the provision is that at the elementary stage and it is probably our good fortune that we will be prevented from fulfilling this goal for a long time; but once this can be done, we have already adopted such policies that the provision of universal secondary and higher education would be simultaneous and automatic! It is obvious that the entire position in this regard needs a careful scrutiny.

## VII

## ENROLMENTS IN THE AGE-GROUP 6-14

26. Some important questions arise in respect of our present enrolment policies and it may be desirable to study them separately for each distinct age-group. We may begin with the problems in relation to the elementary stage or the age-group 6-14.

27. Would it not be desirable to keep the age of admission to elementary schools at six plus? The admission of younger boys (which is fairly common at present and which takes about 10% of the available seats in the age-group 6-11) does not serve a very useful purpose; and it may be more desirable to spend this money on the education of the age-group 6-14. The opposition to this idea, it may be pointed out, comes mainly from the vocal urban middle classes who think that their children must begin education early so as to have a fairly safe margin in the race for government jobs.

28. In the age-group 6-9, the main problem to be faced is that of universal enrolment. It will be seen from Table No. I that the enrolment in the age-group 6-7 was fairly high even in 1961—62.7% for boys and 33.3% for girls. By the end of the Third Plan, it is expected that the enrolment of boys will rise to about 75% and that of girls to about 50% in this age-group. It also appears that almost the same extent of enrolment would be reached simultaneously in the age-groups 7-8 and 8-9. The main question to be faced here, therefore, is this: Who are the non-attending children in this age-group?; What are the reasons which keep them out of schools at present?; and what steps can we take to bring them into schools as early as possible?

29. A few studies of non-attending children in this age-group are available; and it is seen therefrom that the non-enrolment of children in the age-group 6-9 is due to (1) non-availability of school facilities within easy walking distance from the home of the child, due mainly to small and scattered habitations\*; (2) poverty, i.e. the children belong to the weakest social groups such as landless labourers or the aboriginal tribes; (3) apathy of the parents to education; (4) nomadic life of the parents; (5) physical and mental handicaps such as blindness, deafness, idiocy; etc.; and (6) social prejudices, especially in the case of girls. The task of enrolling these children is, therefore, very difficult and also costly. In fact, it may be said that the easier part of the programme of enrolling children in the age-group 6-9 has already been accomplished and that what remains is the hardest nut to be cracked. From the present trends, however, it appears that the advanced States would be able to secure almost universal enrolment in the age-group 6-9 by the end of the Fourth Plan (1970-71) and that even the six backward States (Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh), given some special assistance, would be able to do so by the end of the Fifth Plan (1975-76). This would not be an unsatisfactory progress.

30. From the point of view of implementing Article 45 of the Constitution, therefore, the main problem is the age-group 9-14. In this age-group, there is no question of enrolment--every child would already have been

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\* With a view to providing a school within easy reach of the home of every child, an educational survey was conducted in 1957. There is now an urgent need to repeat this survey as at the end of the Third Plan and to prepare a programme of action for the next three Plans.



enrolled when he was in the age-group 6-7 or at the latest in the age-group 7-9. The major problem here is to prevent the drop off that takes place. In 1955-56, for instance, the total enrolment of boys in the age-group 8-9 was 29.11 lakhs or 56.8% of the total population in the age-group and that of girls was 13.31 lakhs or 27.0% of the age-group. Five years later, in 1960-61, the enrolment of boys in the age-group 13-14 was 17.51 lakhs or 35.4% of the total population in the age-group and that of girls was 5.50 lakhs or 11.8% of the age-group. In other words, the enrolment of boys dropped by about 40% and that of girls by about 60%. This is a colossal wastage and, what is even worse, it is being reduced very slowly. For instance, in 1950-51, the enrolment of boys in the age-group 8-9 was 22.84 lakhs (or 50.2% of the age-group) and it fell down to an enrolment of 12.86 lakhs (or 28.4% of the age-group in 1955-56 which shows a reduction of about 45%. Similarly, the enrolment of girls in the age-group 8-9 in 1950-51 was 9.47 lakhs (or 21.8% of the age-group) and it fell down to 3.23 lakhs (or 7.6% of the age-group) in 1955-56--a fall of about 66%. Comparing these with the figures given above for the period from 1955-56 to 1960-61, we see that the reduction in the drop-outs is only about 1% per year. At this rate, we shall need about 40 to 50 years to reduce all the present wastage! Obviously, we cannot plan on such a basis and we shall have to adopt some technique of quickly reducing this wastage, say in a period of 10 to 15 years.

31. Such an urgent approach to the solution of the problem necessitates an enquiry into the causes of wastage. From a number of studies made in this sector, it appears that the main cause of this wastage (which accounts for about 65% of the cases) is economic--the children are withdrawn from school because they are needed for work at home and cannot attend school on a full-time basis. The only way to overcome this wastage is to start part-time schools and to enable children to

earn and learn. The other causes are social (such as marriage or betrothal) and defects in the system itself (such as poor quality of schools which cannot 'hold' the children). This will need efforts in terms of mass adult education and qualitative improvement of elementary schools\*.

32. If these steps could be taken, it will be possible to enrol all children in the age-group 6-14, to fulfil the directive of Article 45 of the Constitution, and to stop all further additions to the ranks of the illiterates by the end of the Sixth Plan (1980-81) or even earlier.

33. Two special aspects of the problem of providing universal education in the age-group 6-14 deserve special notice. These are: (1) the education of girls, and (2) the education of the weaker sections of the community and particularly of the scheduled castes and tribes. A detailed examination of both these special problems has been made in separate papers.

## VIII

### ENROLMENTS IN THE AGE-GROUP 14-24

34. In the age-group 6-14, the target of enrolment is definite and precise because free and compulsory education is to be provided for all. There are also no major curricular problems because it is mostly a programme of undifferentiated good general education that is to be given to all children. But once we go beyond this age-group, the problems posed are entirely of a different

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\* For a detailed study of wastage in elementary schools, see The Indian Year Book of Education 1964, Second Year Book of National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi; Chapter VIII.

type.

To begin with, there can be no precise and self-contained targets of enrolment at the secondary and university stages, as at the elementary stage. Here, the targets of enrolment will be related, very largely, to the needs of the society for different categories of manpower and will thus vary from country to country and from one period to another.

Secondly, since education at this stage has to suit the different aptitudes, interests and abilities of students and has to train them for different walks of life, the provision of diversified courses assumes great significance and what is essential to examine is not only the total enrolment in these age-groups, but also the enrolments in different types of courses.

Thirdly, the quality of education becomes of far greater significance at these stages than the quantum of enrolment. At the primary stage, the objectives are limited and it is possible to say that "some education is certainly better than none". Hence the quantum of enrolment is of greater significance than quality. But the balance begins to tilt in favour of quality at the middle school stage and the significance of quality increases, in a geometrical proportion as it were, as we proceed up the educational ladder--from middle to secondary, secondary to collegiate, and from collegiate to post-graduate and research which is the most crucial and seminal stage that fertilises the whole field of education and on whose quality depends the quality, not only of the educational system, but of the entire social system itself. From the secondary stage onwards, therefore, it is not the numbers enrolled in schools that matter so much as the quality of education provided. In fact, as persons receiving secondary and higher education generally fill posts of leadership in various walks of life, it is far more dangerous to have 'bad' education at these stages

than to have no education at all. As Shakespeare puts it: 'Lilies that pester smell far worse than weeds'.

35. A preliminary statement on the changes in certain attitudes in this regard is essential for a proper appreciation of recent developments in the field. Prior to 1947, our educational thought was mostly guided by British precedents; and hence the common view held was that elementary education should be for all while secondary and collegiate education should be for the gifted few. The Sargent Plan, prepared in 1944, was, therefore, based on this concept. It proposed to provide secondary education for one child in every five that completed the primary school and university education for one child in every fifteen that completed the secondary school. But public opinion has changed so greatly during the last 17 years that this policy is no longer acceptable. This is due to several reasons.

Firstly, the old job-values which used to be attached to elementary education have now almost disappeared with the result that, for seekers of government jobs (and this includes every boy and one girl in every three or four), secondary education has become the minimum and university education the optimum academic equipment required. This creates immense pressures for access to secondary and higher education.

Secondly, the slow rate of economic growth, which does not create adequate employment opportunities at different stages of education, also compels children to proceed to secondary schools because they do not get a suitable job at the end of the elementary stage and to colleges, because they do not get a suitable job at the end of the secondary stage. In fact, several parents send their children to secondary schools and colleges for the simple reason that they cannot get employment and because they do not know what to do with the children if they were to remain idle at home. In short, the situation

in an under-developed economy is just the opposite of that in an industrialised society. In the latter, the employment opportunities are so good and plentiful that 'opportunity costs' in education become very real and it requires a considerable sacrifice on the part of the family to send their children to higher stages of education and not to put them in for some employment. On the other hand, in a developing economy, it is the absence of employment opportunities which makes the 'opportunity costs' in education rather unreal and compels children to continue in schools because they cannot obtain suitable employment outside. At this point, the general laws of supply and demand also come into play and strengthen the trend for expansion. For instance, a large number of secondary schools and colleges got established in order to meet the ever-increasing demand from parents; and these, in their turn, stimulate the desire of students to continue education still further.

Thirdly, it may also be pointed out that, in the post-independence period in India, the influence of American educational developments and policies is becoming more powerful and discernible so that, from the purely philosophical point of view, we seem to have already accepted the concept of 'secondary education for all' and 'higher education for as many as possible', even before we are in a position to provide universal elementary education.

36. A similar change has also come about in our attitude to the levy of fees in secondary schools and colleges. Prior to 1947, the general view was that secondary and collegiate education should be largely supported by fees. Consequently, fees in government institutions were kept high and there were curbs on the minimum fees which private institutions could charge. The primary objective of this policy was to reduce the financial burden on the State; but it did also help in keeping down enrolment pressures to some extent. During the last 17 years, however, there has been a tremendous change in these

policies and the people now demand 'free' education not only at the elementary stage but also at the secondary and university stages. At the very minimum, they would like to have 'free' education at the secondary stage and low fees with large concessions at the collegiate stage. The Congress Manifesto issued at Bhubaneswar speaks of a programme of providing free education till the end of the secondary stage. This policy has already been adopted in Jammu and Kashmir and Madras. In most other States, the free studentships given at the secondary stage have been increased very considerably and the stage seems to be well set for making all secondary education free in the next five to ten years. Even at the university stage, there is a strong pressure to make education free or to reduce fees to the minimum. In Jammu and Kashmir, university education is free for all. In some other States such as Maharashtra or Gujarat, there are very large concessions in fees at the university stage and the trend to expand these concessions is continually on the increase. Fees in higher education have come to be stabilised at a low level and any attempt to raise them is vigorously resisted. If the recent developments in Mysore are any guide, it has also become politically impossible to raise them to any substantial extent.

37. As an obvious result of these policies of 'open-door' access and free or 'cheap' education at the secondary and higher stages which were adopted in the first three Five Year Plans, the enrolments at the secondary and university stages have increased by leaps and bounds. Between 1951 and 1961, the enrolments have nearly been doubled in the case of boys and trebled in the case of girls. As the pressures arising from the large expansion taking place at the elementary stage have now begun to climb up, the rate of expansion at this stage is even faster at present and it is estimated that the doubling period for secondary education (or the age-group 14-17) has since been reduced to about seven years. Similarly,

the enrolments at the university stage have increased, between 1951 and 1961, at an even faster rate. The present indications are that the enrolments in higher education are being doubled in a period of approximately six years. If these trends continue, it may very well be that, at the end of the Sixth Plan, the enrolments in secondary education may be about 50% of its total population in the age-group and those at the university stage may be about 10% of its population! This will not make India, by any means, an over-educated country. In fact, the enrolments in India, even in 1981, may be of about the same order as they were in Japan in 1961. But in view of the under-developed stage of economy and the paucity of resources available, they create immense problems of (1) financing of education, (2) securing the necessary number of competent teachers, and (3) maintenance of standards.

38. As may be easily imagined, these pressures of expansion have led to a great dilution of quality at the secondary and university stages, especially because the necessary resources to maintain standards are not available. Even if one does not quite agree with the thesis that the standards at these stages of education have fallen, it is undeniable that we have not been able to raise them sufficiently or to keep pace with advanced countries where a great revolution in deepening the content of secondary and university education has taken place in recent years and especially after the Second World War. The main problem to be faced in secondary and university education in the next 10-15 years is, therefore, to raise standards so largely that they would be comparable with those in advanced countries. This may be done with comparative ease if we can control expansion. But as that does not seem to be possible—at least to a material extent—one is called upon to reconcile the claims of an increasing demand for secondary and higher education with the urgent necessity of maintaining appropriate standards at these levels. This may have to be attempted in a number of ways such as :

- (1) the organisation of correspondence education;
- (2) the development of programmes of part-time education on a large-scale;
- (3) the reduction of unit costs consistently with the maintenance of standards; and
- (4) making a selective approach to educational development, either by selecting a few institutions for intensive development or by concentrating on the development of some significant sectors, or by selecting and assisting talented students; or
- (5) by a suitable combination of one or more of these ways.

## IX

### LIBERAL-VOCATIONAL IMBALANCE IN SECONDARY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

39. Another significant point with regard to enrolments in secondary and higher education, viz., the proportion of the enrolments in education, needs special attention. As was pointed out earlier, almost the whole of secondary and higher education is of an academic and liberal type in traditional societies while it is mostly of a vocational character in modern and industrialised societies; and that, in India, which aspires to be a modern industrialised society, the expansion of secondary and higher education will have to be accompanied, side by side, with an attempt to vocationalise it and to relate it directly to production. But this is precisely what is not happening and what we are expanding today is the same old type of purely academic secondary and higher education. This has already created serious problems of educated-unemployment which are becoming more extensive and acute every year.

40. At the secondary stage, for instance, the enrolments in the courses of general and vocational education in the post-independence period were as in Table III.

It may roughly be stated that, at present, about 88% of the children who proceed to secondary schools are enrolled in schools of general education and that about 12% of them only are enrolled in vocational schools. In the advanced countries of the West, this proportion is very different. In West Germany, for instance, the proportion of students in schools of general education is 30% while that in vocational schools is 70%. In Japan, these proportions would be about 40 and 60.

41. It has to be remembered that this problem of vocationalisation of secondary education (which would imply that, at the end of the secondary stage, a large majority of students would enter life in various fields rather than strive to enter the universities) was raised as early as 1882 by the Indian Education Commission. It pointed out that, "throughout India, high schools have hitherto been regarded, not only or chiefly as schools for secondary instruction intended for pupils whose education will terminate at that stage, but in a much greater degree--it may almost be said exclusively--as preparatory schools for those who are to become students of the universities." To remedy this deficiency, it recommended that secondary schools in India should develop what may be described as the equivalent of the 'modern side of schools in Europe' and suggested that "in the upper classes of high schools, there should be two divisions: one leading to the entrance examination of the universities, and the other of a more practical character, intended to fit youths for commercial or non-literary pursuits." This recommendation has been repeated, with increasing emphasis, by every Commission or important committee ever since; and although about 80 years have rolled by, the position continues to remain

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t	2		3		4		5		6		7	
1955-56	16, 55, 750 88.6	3, 47, 511 84.0	20, 03, 261 87.7	2, 14, 079 11.4	66, 041 16.0	2, 80, 120 12.3						
1956-57	18, 72, 864 89.0	3, 82, 048 86.1	22, 54, 912 88.5	2, 31, 415 11.0	61, 787 13.9	2, 93, 202 11.5						
1957-58	19, 84, 146 89.1	4, 28, 785 87.1	24, 12, 931 88.7	2, 43, 404 10.9	63, 325 12.9	3, 06, 729 11.3						
1958-59	22, 14, 693 89.0	4, 81, 150 87.3	26, 95, 843 88.7	2, 72, 331 11.0	70, 117 12.7	3, 42, 448 11.3						
1959-60	24, 41, 794 88.9	5, 64, 797 87.8	30, 06, 591 88.7	3, 05, 626 11.1	78, 365 12.2	3, 83, 991 11.3						
1960-61	27, 76, 314 89.1	6, 86, 395 88.9	34, 62, 709 89.1	3, 39, 498 10.9	85, 549 11.1	4, 25, 047 10.9						

very unsatisfactory as the above statistics will show. In spite of all that has been said in the past and in spite of a very clear realisation of the need to vocationalise secondary education, the average secondary school today still continues to be purely academic in character and tries to 'fit the boy or girl for an entrance into a college' while it almost 'unfits him or her for everything else.' This is probably the most serious problem to be faced in the reconstruction of Indian education in the immediate future.

42. What has been said above of secondary education is almost equally true of higher education. This problem was first highlighted by the Calcutta University Commission. It pointed out that the total population of the then province of Bengal and the United Kingdom was almost the same--about 45 million and that, by a curious coincidence, the number of students preparing for university degree was also almost the same--about 26, 000\*. But the main difficulty lay in the fact that, in Bengal, a very small proportion of the students went in for what may ordinarily be described as vocational training. For instance, "the great majority--over 22, 000 out of 26, 000--pursued purely literary courses which did not fit them for any but administrative, clerical, teaching and (indirectly) legal careers, while in the United Kingdom (if the training of teachers be regarded as vocational training), it was possible that these proportions would be nearly reversed." The Commission also pointed out that a comparison of the distribution of university students between academic and vocational courses with any other

\* The Commission pointed out that the students studying in the Intermediate stage (who formed about 15, 000 out of the total of 26, 000) were doing what was, for all practical purposes, school work and that it would be wrong to regard them as 'university students' as such.



large and popular State would also yield similar results and observed that Bengal was "unlike any other civilised country in that so high a proportion of its educated classes set before them a university degree as the natural goal of ambition and sought this goal by means of studies which are almost purely literary in character and which, therefore, provided scarcely any direct professional training."

43. At the university stage, the position has improved somewhat in the post-independence period, due mainly to the programme of economic development undertaken in the first three Five Year Plans and consequent impetus given to agricultural, medical, engineering and technical education. But in spite of all that has been done for vocational education, the expansion in general education itself has been so vast that the overall relative position of general versus vocational education at the university stage is not greatly altered. This will be seen from the statistics in Table No. IV.

44. It will be seen from the foregoing discussion that, both at the secondary and university stages, there is a considerable imbalance between the liberal and vocational courses. In spite of a very large expansion of vocational schools at the secondary stage in the first two Plans (the enrolment in these schools has increased from 1.91 lakhs in 1950-51 to 4.25 lakhs in 1960-61), the expansion of general secondary education in the same period has been so rapid (the enrolment in these schools has increased from 12.80 lakhs in 1950-51 to 27.76 lakhs in 1960-61) that the proportion of students enrolled in vocational courses at the secondary stage to total enrolment has declined from 11.4% in 1950-51 to 10.9% in 1960-61. At the university stage, the picture is a little better. The overall enrolment in colleges of professional education has increased from 90,000 in 1950-51 to 265,000 in 1960-61. But in spite of this nearly three-fold increase, the proportion of students in colleges of professional education has increased only

TABLE No. IV

## Enrolment in Colleges of General and Vocational Education

Year	Enrolment in Colleges for General Education		Enrolment in Colleges for Professional Education		Total
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
1950-51	2,85,405 (76.9)	40,318 (89.6)	85,595 (23.1)	4,668 (10.4)	90,263 (21.7)
1951-52	3,24,231 (77.6)	45,262 (89.4)	93,423 (22.4)	5,381 (10.6)	98,804 (21.1)
1952-53	3,61,351 (77.6)	53,714 (89.5)	1,04,223 (22.4)	6,304 (10.5)	1,10,527 (21.0)
1953-54	4,11,590 (78.3)	61,396 (89.8)	1,14,150 (21.7)	6,955 (10.2)	1,21,105 (20.4)
1954-55	4,57,464 (78.4)	72,109 (89.4)	1,26,289 (21.6)	8,508 (10.6)	1,34,797 (20.3)
1955-56	4,91,080 (77.8)	84,088 (90.1)	1,39,776 (22.2)	9,218 (9.9)	1,48,994 (20.6)
1956-57	5,29,475 (77.9)	95,797 (89.5)	1,50,271 (22.1)	11,193 (10.5)	1,61,464 (20.5)
1957-58	5,54,013 (76.7)	1,06,795 (88.5)	1,68,252 (23.3)	13,901 (11.5)	1,82,153 (21.6)

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Year	Enrdment in Colleges for General Education			Enrdment in Colleges for Professional Education		
	Boys		Total	Boys		Total
	Boys	Girls		Boys	Girls	
1958-59	6, 09, 788 (76.6)	1, 24, 680 (86.0)	7, 34, 468 (76.7)	1, 85, 784 (25.0)	15, 905 (11.3)	2, 01, 689 (21.6)
1959-60	6, 47, 769 (75.0)	1, 37, 340 (86.0)	7, 85, 109 (76.7)	2, 15, 740 (25.0)	22, 343 (14.0)	2, 38, 083 (23.3)
1960-61	6, 56, 972 (74.3)	1, 49, 595 (85.1)	8, 06, 567 (75.3)	2, 38, 987 (26.3)	26, 124 (14.9)	2, 65, 111 (24.7)

from 21.7% in 1950-51 to 24.7% in 1960-61 due mainly to the fact that the enrolment in colleges of general education has also increased tremendously during the same period--from 2.85 lakhs in 1950-51 to 6.57 lakhs in 1960-61. If the needs of a modern industrialised society are to be adequately met, the proportion of students enrolled in general and vocational courses will have to be practically reversed.

45. What are the main causes which lead to this imbalance or why is it that we are unable to increase the proportion of students in vocational courses at the secondary and collegiate stages? There are several reasons. The first is the traditional attraction for the white-collared professions and the social ethos which denigrates work with hands. The second is the more attractive remuneration that is still offered to people in the white-collared professions (except for engineering and technical education). The third is the financial fact that people find it easier to start secondary schools and colleges of general education (because they are much cheaper to establish and maintain) than schools and colleges of professional education. If this picture is to be changed, a number of steps will have to be taken :

- (1) to put some sort of a restraint on the expansion of schools and colleges of general education;
- (2) to provide the necessary funds, on a priority basis, for the establishment of vocational schools and colleges;
- (3) to improve the remuneration offered to those who complete vocational courses so that it becomes better than that offered to those in the white-collared professions, or in other words, to adopt a different strategy of remuneration for skilled jobs in the white-collared vis-a-vis the vocational carriers;

- (4) to make determined efforts to siphon students off into vocational courses at two or three levels--first at the end of the middle school, then at the end of the high school, finally at the end of higher secondary course or at the beginning of the University Course. Obviously, this problem is extremely important and needs the highest attention of educational planners.

## X

## A PROGRAMME OF ACTION

46. In view of the foregoing discussion, what programme of action in respect of enrolment policies in Indian education can we recommend for the next 10-15 years? A few suggestions are offered here as a basis for consideration.

47. Elementary Stage: At the elementary stage, the complaint is that the enrolments are not increasing fast enough. The nation has set before itself the goal of providing free and compulsory education for all children till they complete the age of 14 years. This goal was to be reached by 1960. As things now stand, we will not be able to reach it even by 2000 A.D. One of the most important issues in the future development of education is, therefore, to decide how and when the Directive of Article 45 of the Constitution would be fulfilled.

48. It may be pointed out that all expansion of elementary education takes place in three stages. The first is that of universal provision of facilities in which an attempt is made to provide a school within easy walking distance from the home of every child so that those who desire to educate their children may have the necessary facilities readily available. The next stage is that of universal enrolment when an attempt is made to enrol every child into school by propaganda, persuasion and, if necessary,

legal action. This is obviously more difficult than the first. But even more difficult is the third stage of universal retention in which an attempt is made to keep in school every child that is once enrolled till he reaches the prescribed age or completes the prescribed class. It is, of course, obvious that these three stages are not mutually exclusive and that they generally run into one another. The expansion of elementary education in the advanced countries of the world has followed, more or less, the sequence of these 3 stages and there is no doubt that similar developments will take place in India also.

(a) Universal Provision of Schools: In the first three Plans, the largest emphasis was on the first stage, namely, universal provision of schools. To assist in the realisation of this goal, an educational survey of the country as a whole was carried out in 1957. It found that there was universal provision of elementary schools in urban areas and that the deficiencies were mostly restricted to the rural areas alone. It also found that there were about 800,000 rural habitations in the country and that a large proportion of them were still provided with educational facilities. To cover all of them, it assumed that a primary school should be provided in every habitation of 300 people or more (smaller habitations should be so grouped that every child would have a school within 1-2 miles of his home) and that a middle school would be provided in every habitation of 1,500 people (smaller habitations would be so grouped as to create a middle school within 3-5 miles of the home of every child). On these assumptions, it proposed the opening of about 103,000 new primary schools and 21,700 new middle schools. A large number of these have been opened in the last seven years and, at least in so far as primary schools are concerned, we appear to be within sight of the goal of universal provision of school facilities. All the same, it would be worthwhile to revise the educational survey as at the end of the Third Plan so that the task which has remained undone as yet can be

completed in the Fourth Five Year Plan. It thus appears that the goal of universal provision of elementary schools could be reached in all parts of the country by 1970-71 at the latest.

(b) Universal Enrolment : With regard to the second stage, namely, universal enrolment, our achievements in the first three plans have been rather haphazard. The main object of this stage is to enrol all children in the age-group 6 plus (with some exceptions in the case of children of 5 plus and 7 plus) in class I. But unfortunately, we have not been very conscious of this objective. What happens at present is that children of all ages--from 4 to 14 and above--are indiscriminately enrolled in class I. This makes the age-composition of class I extremely heterogeneous and the heterogeneity continues in all the subsequent classes. Consequently, the quality of instruction is badly affected throughout the elementary stage. It should be our endeavour, therefore, to avoid such haphazard enrolments in future, to enrol fresh children in schools as far as possible in the age-group 6-7 so that more than 80 per cent of the children in class I would be in the age-group 6-7 and the rest in the ages 5-6 or 7-8. Given a conscious and an intensive effort, there is no reason why we should not be able to reach this goal by the end of the Fourth Plan. It is, therefore, recommended that we should concentrate on this objective during the next five to six years.

(c) Universality of Retention : Once the children of the right age-group (6-7) are enrolled in class I, we have to see that they progress annually from class to class (there is no stagnation) and that they do not leave the school (there is no wastage) till they complete 14 years of age or the elementary course. This aspect of the problem has been mostly neglected in the first three Plans so that wastage and stagnation are very high at present. It was shown earlier that of every 100 children who enter class I, only about 40 reach class V in the

fifth year and about 25 reach class VIII in the eighth year. The main task to be attempted during the next three Plans, therefore, is to reduce wastage and stagnation. From this point of view, the most important programme will be that of providing part-time instruction for students in the age-group 9-14 and also to improve the quality of our schools so that their attracting and holding power is greatly increased. If the programme of part-time instruction is adopted, there is no reason why the goal laid down in Article 45 of the Constitution should not be fulfilled by 1981.

49. It is, therefore, suggested that the following enrolment policies should be adopted in the age-groups 6-14 during the next three Plans :--

- (1) The first attempt to be made is to enrol all children in class I in the age-group 6-7 or, at the most, in the age-group 7-8.
- (2) The teaching in the schools should be so improved that every child which is enrolled in schools will progress from class to class in an orderly manner and that stagnation is reduced to the very minimum.
- (3) A child which is once enrolled in schools should not be allowed to leave the school until it completes the age of 14 years or the last class of the elementary stage (class VII or VIII as the case may be). If economic and other difficulties intervene, the child may cease to attend on a full-time basis, but he must be under an obligation to continue on a part-time basis--the part-time schooling being organised for about 300 hours a year. This may be arranged at the rate of two hours a day for three days in a week or at

suitable seasons when the agricultural work may be slack.

- (4) In the transitional period in the Fourth and Fifth Five Year Plans, attendance in a programme of part-time education, as mentioned above, should be made obligatory for all children in the age-group 11-14 who have not completed class IV at least of the elementary school.

50. Secondary Education: At the secondary stage, our first attempt should be to restrict the extremely rapid and indiscriminate expansion of general secondary education that is now taking place. To this end, the following five measures, either separately or in combination, may be adopted :--

(a) Institution of an Examination at the End of the Elementary Stage: It is suggested that there should be an examination at the end of the elementary stage. It should be optional for the students to appear or not to appear for this examination; but a pass therein should be regarded as obligatory for those who want to enter secondary schools of general education. Such a qualifying examination will have several advantages. In the first place, it will reduce the proportion of children who pass from elementary to secondary education and thereby act as a check on indiscriminate expansion. Secondly, it will create better motivation, both for teachers and students. Thirdly, it will improve the attainment level of students when they enter secondary schools so that the standard of secondary education itself will tend to rise.

(b) Increase in Fees: It is felt that the present policy of providing free education at the secondary stage is neither beneficial nor rational. Such a non-discriminatory concession will not create any harm if it is applied at a stage where education is to be neither beneficial nor

rational. Such a non-discriminatory concession will not create any harm if it is applied at a stage where education is to be universal or compulsory for all. It will also create no harm if the enrolments at the given stage mirror exactly the composition of the society at large. But neither of these conditions is fulfilled at the secondary stage. There is no idea, at least for several years to come, of making secondary education universal and compulsory. Similarly, the population of secondary school students does not represent the composition of the society at large. In fact, the advantage of secondary education is now mostly taken by the upper and middle classes and by the urban people. A policy of indiscriminate free secondary education, therefore, tends to favour the haves rather than the have-nots. It is, therefore, felt that this policy should be abandoned and replaced by a policy in which fairly high fees are charged and concessions in fees are given to those students who are deserving but economically handicapped. At the very least, we should restrict free secondary education on some equitable basis. For instance, we might say that free secondary education would be provided only to one boy and one girl of every family and that additional children coming into secondary schools would have to pay fees at fairly high rates. This is a very important question of policy which needs attention of the Education Commission.

(c) Enforcing Strict Conditions of Recognition: One major cause of the indiscriminate expansion of secondary education is political pressures that are brought to bear on the education departments and compel them to recognise sub-standard secondary schools. Even if the normal conditions which are prescribed for secondary schools are rigidly insisted upon, the increase in the number of secondary schools will go down by more than 50% and, to that extent, the enrolments will also go down. What now happens is the establishment of a vicious circle. We do not insist on the maintenance of standards when new secondary schools are established and recognised.

Consequently, sub-standard schools come into existence and lead to an increase in enrolments. This, in its turn, creates the demand for more secondary schools so that a still larger number of sub-standards or more sub-standard schools are brought into existence; and so on. The only way to break this vicious circle--and thereby to control the discriminate expansion of general secondary education--is to enforce rigid conditions for recognition of new secondary schools or even in the continuation of recognition to schools which have already come into existence but are still sub-standard.

(d) Vocationalisation: While it is necessary to restrict the expansion of general secondary education, every step has to be taken to expand, as quickly as possible, the enrolments in vocational secondary schools. For this purpose, the establishment of vocational schools should be regarded as a high priority charge on government funds and liberal grants-in-aid should be made available to private enterprise for the purpose. Fees in vocational schools should be low or it should be totally free. The remuneration and employment policies should also be such as to place vocational education at a premium vis-a-vis general education.

(e) Part-time Education: It may be difficult to resist the demand for secondary education, especially because there would not be adequate employment opportunities for children who have completed the elementary stage. In order to meet this demand, we should undertake a large programme of providing part-time or correspondence education at the secondary stage. This will be less costly and in this manner, it may be possible to provide secondary education for every child who demands it, without diluting the standards of secondary schools which provide instruction on a full-time basis or increase the overall costs to a prohibitive figure.

51. Universities Stage: What has been stated above for the secondary stage is also applicable, mutatis mutandis to the university stage.

52. The policies recommended here are in such striking contrast with the existing thinking on the subject that there is no chance of their acceptance by any individual State unless a decision to this effect is taken on an all-India basis and adequate measures are adopted to educate public opinion on the subject. This is a special responsibility of the Education Commission. It is, therefore, recommended that the Commission may discuss the issues raised above and come to some tentative conclusions which could then be discussed, at a very high level, with the Chief Ministers, Education Ministers, Education Secretaries and Directors of Public Instruction in every State and Union Territories.

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# ANNEXURE I

## Total Enrolment by Age-groups and Stages (1951)

Age-Group	I-V	VI-VIII	IX-XII	Vocation and Spl. (School Stage)	University stage (Gen. Edn)	Prof. and Spl. Edn. (College Stage)	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
6-11	(96.0)	(3.7)	(0.0)	(0.3)	(-)	(-)	(100.0)
	1,03,24	3,88	4	34	-	-	1,07,50
	(82.1)	(15.0)	(0.4)	(5.1)	(-)	(-)	(62.4)
6-11	(97.3)	(2.4)	(0.0)	(0.3)	(-)	(-)	(100.0)
	42,15	1,05	1	11	-	-	43,32
	(86.5)	(19.7)	(0.6)	(7.2)	(-)	(-)	(75.1)
11-14	(55.1)	(38.4)	(5.2)	(1.3)	(-)	(-)	(100.0)
	19,91	13,88	188	47	-	-	36,14
	(15.8)	(53.7)	(16.2)	(7.1)	(-)	(-)	(20.9)
11-14	(62.9)	(32.3)	(3.9)	(0.9)	(-)	(-)	(100.0)
	6,06	3,11	37	9	-	-	943
	(12.4)	(58.3)	(20.9)	(5.9)	(-)	(-)	(16.7)

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Age-Group	I-V	VI-VIII	IX-XII	Vocation and Spl. (School Stage)	University stage (Gen. Edn)	Prof. and Spl. Edn. (College Stage)	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
14-18	(12.6)	(36.9)	(37.6)	(10.0)	(2.4)	(0.5)	(100.0)
	2,64	7,69	784	208	50	11	2,086
	(2.1)	(29.8)	(67.7)	(31.2)	(28.4)	(14.9)	(12.1)
14-18	(14.6)	(31.9)	(34.5)	(16.5)	(2.5)	(-)	(100.0)
	52	1,14	123	59	9	-	357
	(1.1)	(21.4)	(69.5)	(38.8)	(36.0)	(-)	(6.2)
18-25	(0.4)	(4.9)	(23.0)	(47.7)	(16.0)	(8.0)	(100.0)
	3	39	182	377	126	63	790
	(0.0)	(1.5)	(15.7)	(56.6)	(71.6)	(85.1)	(4.6)
18-25	(-)	(2.6)	(13.9)	(63.5)	(13.9)	(6.1)	(100.0)
	-	3	16	73	16	7	115
	(-)	(0.6)	(9.0)	(48.1)	(64.0)	(100.0)	(2.0)

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Age-Group	I-V	VI-VIII	IX-XII	Vocation and Spl. (School Stage)	University Stage (Gen. Edn.)	Prof. and Spl. Edn. (College Stage)	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Boys	(73.0)	(15.0)	(6.7)	(3.9)	(1.0)	(0.4)	(100.0)
Total	1, 25, 82	25, 84	11, 58	6, 66	1, 76	74	1, 72, 40
(6-25)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)

Girls	(84.5)	(9.2)	(3.1)	(2.6)	(0.5)	(0.1)	(100.0)
	48, 73	5, 33	1, 77	1, 52	25	7	5, 767
	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)

N.B. (1) The figures (outside brackets) given in each column represent the total enrolment in thousands. For instance, the total enrolment of boys in the age-group 6-11 in classes I-V was 1, 03, 24, 000.

(2) The percentages given within brackets above the main figure show the horizontal percentage. For example, of the total enrolment of boys in the age-group 6-11, 96% is in classes I-V, 3.7% is in classes VI-VIII and 0.3% is in vocational and special schools.

(3) The percentages given within brackets below the enrolment figure represent the vertical percentage. For example, the enrolment of boys in the age-group 6-11 in classes I-V is 82.1% of the total enrolment in these classes, the balance being made up by boys in the age-group 11-14 who form 15.8% and boys in the age-group 14-18 who form 2.1%.

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## ANNEXURE II

Total Enrolment by Age-groups and Stages (1961)

Age-Group	I-V	VI-VIII	IX-XIII	Vocational and Spl. (School Std.)	Univer- Ssity Stage (Gen. Edn.)	Prof. and Spl. Col- lege Std.	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Boys	(96.2)	(3.5)	(0.0)	(0.3)	(-)	(-)	(100.0)
	1, 80, 86	6, 62	8	48	-	-	1, 88, 04
	(83.8)	(13.0)	(0.3)	(4.3)	(-)	(-)	(60.7)
6-11	(97.3)	(2.5)	(0.0)	(0.2)	(-)	(-)	(100.0)
	90, 50	2, 31	1	18	-	-	93, 00
Girls	(86.9)	(14.2)	(0.2)	(7.0)	(-)	(-)	(71.5)
Boys	(48.4)	(44.1)	(6.2)	(1.3)	(0.0)	(-)	(100.0)
	31, 64	28, 83	4, 04	89	1	-	65, 41
	(14.7)	(56.8)	(15.7)	(8.0)	(0.2)	(-)	(21.1)
11-14	(53.6)	(41.6)	(3.7)	(1.1)	(-)	(-)	(100.0)
	12, 77	9, 89	88	26	-	-	23, 80
Girls	(12.3)	(60.7)	(15.0)	(10.0)	(-)	(-)	(18.3)

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Boys	(8.2)	(36.6)	(43.4)	(7.6)	(3.3)	(0.9)	(100.0)	
	3, 28	14, 56	17, 27	3, 01	132	36	39, 20	
	(1.5)	(28.7)	(67.3)	(27.0)	(32.6)	(16.6)	(12.9)	
14-18								
Girls	(8.2)	(38.8)	(41.6)	(7.5)	(3.4)	0.5	(100.0)	
	84	3, 98	4, 26	77	35	5	10, 25	
	(0.8)	(24.4)	(72.4)	(29.7)	(36.1)	(17.9)	(7.9)	
Boys	(0.2)	(4.5)	(26.2)	(41.4)	(16.6)	(11.1)	(100.0)	
	4	74	4, 29	6, 77	2, 72	1, 81	16, 37	
	(0.0)	(1.5)	(16.7)	(60.7)	(67.2)	(83.4)	(5.3)	
18-25								
Girls	(-)	(3.9)	(23.7)	(44.8)	(20.1)	(7.5)	(100.0)	
	-	12	73	1, 38	62	23	3, 08	
	(-)	(0.7)	(12.4)	(53.3)	(63.9)	(82.1)	(2.3)	
Boys	(69.7)	(16.4)	(8.3)	(3.6)	(1.3)	(0.7)	(100.0)	
	2, 15, 82	50, 75	25, 68	11, 15	4, 05	2, 17	3, 09, 62	
Total	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	
(6-25)								
Girls	(80.0)	(12.5)	(4.5)	(2.0)	(0.8)	(0.2)	(100.0)	
	1, 04, 11	16, 30	5, 88	2, 59	97	28	1, 30, 13	
	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	

N. B. The explanations given under Annexure I are applicable, mutatis mutandis, to this Annexure also.